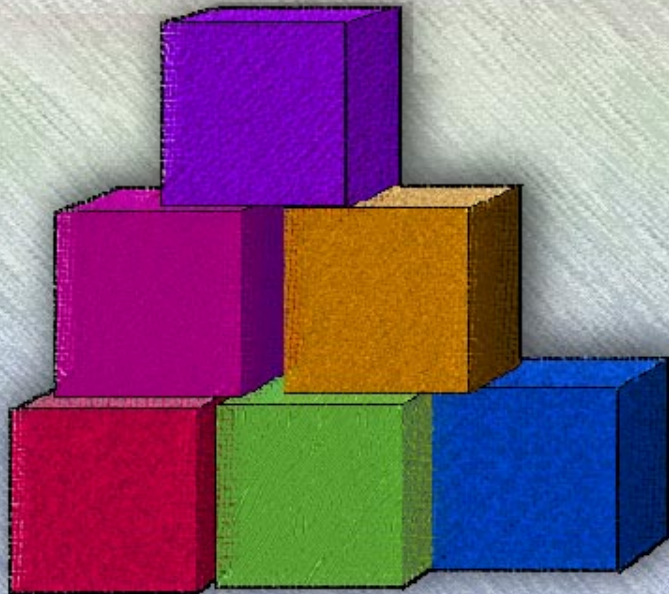


Chronic Truancy:

Outsourcing care - Understanding the role of schools and parents in social bonding



Dr. Carolyn Gentle-Genitty, MSW, PhD

&

Hannah Cowles, MSW PhD Student

Indiana University

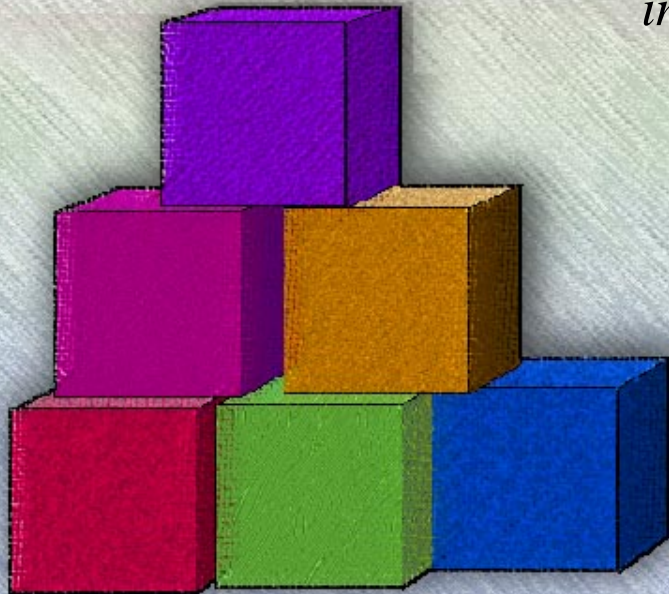
cgentleg@iupui.edu & hcowles@iupui.edu

Overview of Presentation

- Current Understanding of School & Student
 - Concerns about early school leaving from recent study on

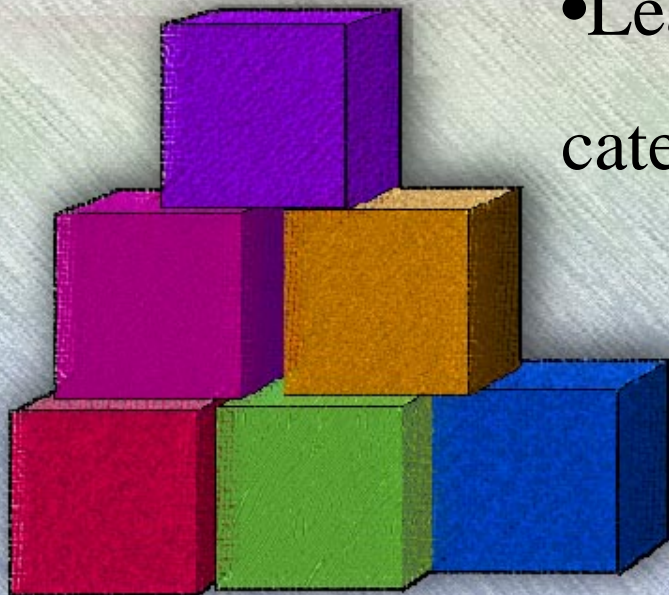
“Tracking more than absences: Chronic Truancy and the impact of social bonding”

- Open for Discussion
 - Closing



By the end of this session you would have learned ...

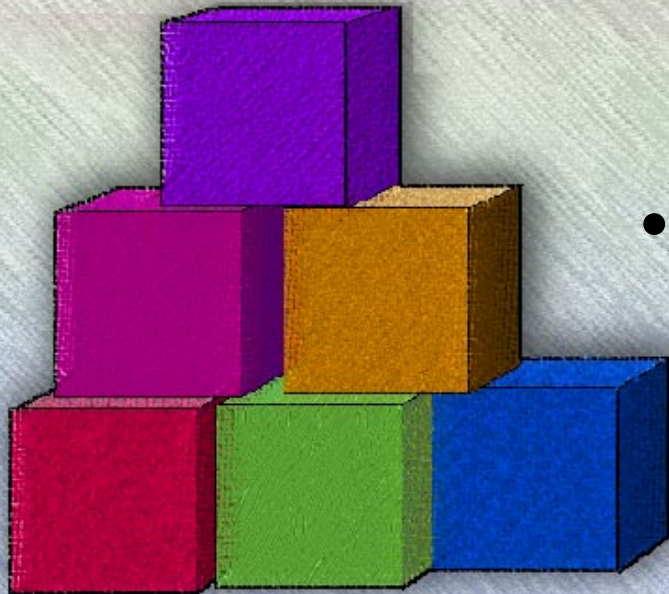
- 4 ways of measuring stakes in social bonding
- Understood to frame the work we do with & for truants.
- Learn about different truancy types & categories
- Practice with the School PSSB & Truancy Assessment tool



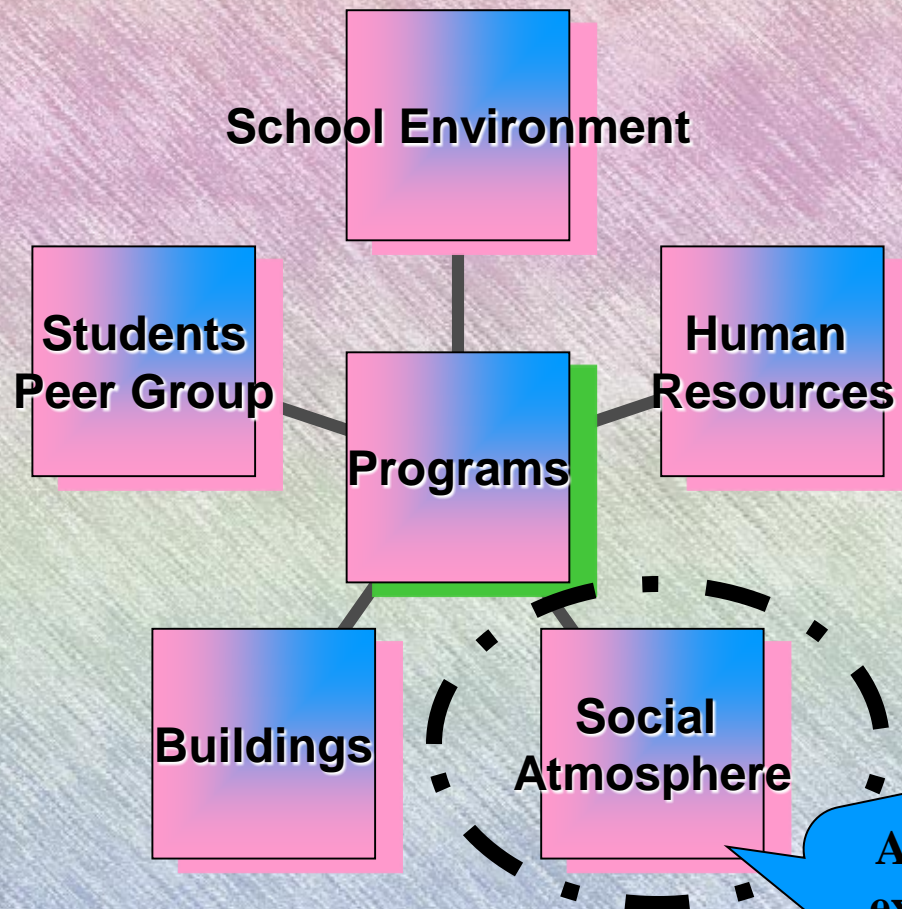
Today's Context:

Current Understanding of school & student

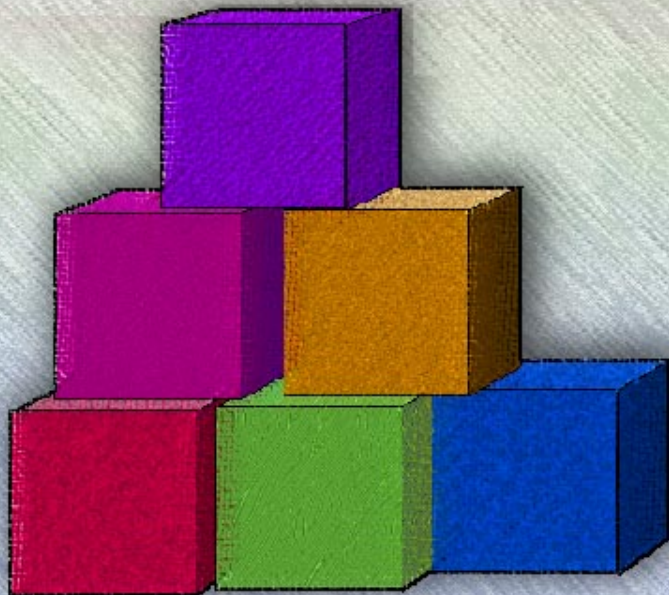
- Past Family Configuration
- Outsourcing of need
- Response to Truancy
(absences, programs)



School Environment



Area rarely
examined in
literature



Consequences of Truancy

- 60% daytime crimes committed between **8am & 3pm**
- Over **75-85%** juvenile offenders were formerly chronic truants (Colorado Foundation for Families & Children, 2001)
- **Increase arrests for**
 - aggravated assault (**91%**),
 - simple assault (**197%**),
 - weapons law violations (**138%**),
 - sex offenses (**121%**),
 - drug abuse violations (**105%**),
 - disorderly conduct (**116%**), and
 - curfew and loitering (**126%**)
 - (Snyder & Sigmund, 2006)
- **More youths than ever before entered the juvenile system in the period of 1980-2003.**
 - **LOST OF A Future**



❑ **Top 5 major school problems**

❑ **1 in every 100** students at-risk of truancy.

❑ **Age 14-16 it is 1 in every 10**

❑ **Of every 10 Black men in prison in 2004, 6 were school dropouts**

Children unaccounted for in school system

❑ **Texas 140,000 students to truancy per year**

❑ **New York City, daily average of 150,000 students**

❑ **Los Angeles loses track of over 62,000 students daily**

❑ **Detroit truancy investigation rate of over 66,440 per yr**

❑ **Milwaukee loses track of 4,000 students per day**

❑ **Philadelphia loses track of 2,500 students per day**

27 states = 1,572,179 unaccounted children in the US as of 2006

(Center for School Improvement Policy Studies Boise State University)

Indiana Stats

❑ **13%** -- about **16,000** children -- recorded **10** or more days of unexcused absences in the **2005-06** school year.
(*Indianapolis Star*, April 2007)

❑ **44%** of Lynhurst students were habitual truants in **2005-2006**.

❑ highest truancy rate **among middle schools in Marion County** (*Indiana Department of Education*)

❑ Wayne Township -- **1 in 3** students qualify as **chronic absentees**. (*Indianapolis Star*, April 2007)

❑ **IPS**, **18%** of students recorded **10** or more in **2005-2006**.

Preparing to Study Chronic Truancy



1 = Cause

Causes of Truancy

1. School-Related Incidents
(Richart, et al. 2003)
2. Zero Tolerance Policies
(Richart, 2001)
3. Inadequacies of the School System
(Kozol, 2005)
4. Tracking Absences & Absent Children
(Montecel, et al., 2004)
5. Student Engagement not Primary Responsibility
(George & Alexander, 1993).
6. Inability to meet Student Needs
(DeMedio, 1991)
7. Little focus on School Context
(Brundrett, 2004)
8. Not engaging Students @ behavioral, cognitive, & emotional levels
(Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004).

Preparing to Study Chronic Truancy



2 = Context

Where?, Why?, When?, Who?

Where?

- In middle school and earlier (Roderick, 2003)

Why?

- Students not engaged in school
- Only academic needs – not psychological/social
- Being pre-disposed to violence (Dunlop, 1996)
- Other reasons as explored in the causes & handout

When?

- After leaving supported elementary schools to go fragmented middle schools (Schulenberg et al., 2004)

Who?

- All children
- Mainly Blacks & Hispanics (Clark, 1994)
- Gifted students from 'dumbed-down' curriculum (Yecke, 2003)

Polk and Schafer (1972)

- ❑ if it is “the way institutions relate to young people, and ... [their contributions to the] process that creates youthful deviance, then it is these institutions that must be corrected, not the young who are its casualties” (p.7).



General Study Findings

(Descriptive)



Does Well

- ❑ Well at building opportunities for attachment (50%) and involvement (34%) in their school

| Thematic Responses based on Measures of Social Bond | Total % from each rank |
|--|------------------------|
| <u>Opportunities for Attachment</u> “great student-ratio, mentoring,, provide role models, kind teachers, and safe environment” | 50 |
| <u>Opportunities for Involvement</u> <u>(attendance)</u> “activities, strong extracurricular programs, sporting events, group gatherings, and field trips” | 34 |
| Opportunities for Belief (<i>rewards etc.</i>) | 9 |
| Opportunities for Commitment (<i>membership</i>) | 7 |

Areas for Improvement to build bond

General Study Findings Cont'd (Descriptive)

| Categories | Valid % per Rank |
|---|------------------|
| Relationship Building <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual meetings,• Survey of student interest,• Reaching all kids,• More opportunities to get involved,• Reaching out to disengaged students more deliberately,• Time with staff, and• Be more sensitive to student perception of fairness and equity among others. | 50 |
| Life Skill Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teaching respect• Student empowerment• Socialization skills | 12 |
| School Environment Enhancements | 10 |
| More Parent Involvement | 9 |
| More Teacher Involvement | 7 |
| Academic Related Programs | 7 |
| Other | 5 |

General Study Findings

Cont'd

(Descriptive)

Who is most responsible for creating social bond?

| Rank | Total # of respondents for each choice | |
|---------------|---|------------|
| Rank 1 | Parents | 108 |
| Rank 2 | Student him/herself | 96 |
| Rank 3 | School | 94 |
| Rank 4 | Teachers | 75 |
| Rank 5 | School Principals | 61 |
| Rank 6 | Community | 61 |

What contributes the most to chronic truancy?

| Factors | Percent Contribution |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Family/Parental Influence | 62 |
| School Factors | 18 |
| Home environment | 13 |
| Other | 6 |
| Student Abilities | 2 |

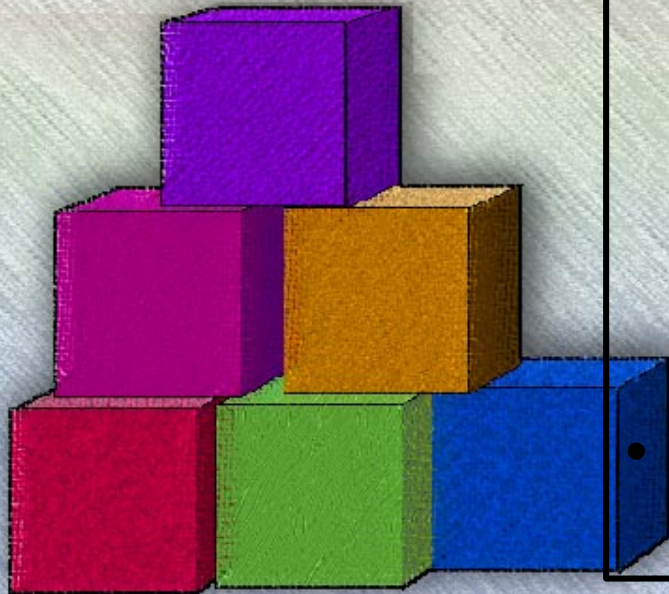
Conclusions

- ✓ **Rates of chronic truancy is influenced by schools' social bonding opportunities and principals' perceptions of students' social bond to school**
- ✓ Invest in building school environment
- ✓ Invest in school programs and opportunities for students to be
 - Involved, Committed, Attached
 - And to believe in value of school
- ✓ Counting absences no longer helps to understand entire picture of truancy
- ✓ Black and Hispanic students are not fully supported
- ✓ Policies of Exclusion do not help to respond appropriately to truancy



What is the link between juvenile school disengagement and antisocial behavior?

- **Disengagement** (Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004)
 - **Behavioral**
 - (doing school work, not skipping school);
 - **Cognitive**
 - (motivation, effort, desire to master tasks);
and
 - **Emotional**
 - (interest, attitudes towards school, teachers, and appreciation for school success).
- **Antisocial behaviors**
 - Behaviors against conventional norms



Section B - TYPE OF TRUANT

Check one box that applies to the student based on the student, school, and parent reports.

Type of truant based on **Student Self-Report**

- ☐ Specific lesson absence,
- ☐ Post registration truancy,
- ☐ Parental-condoned truancy,
- ☐ Other: _____

Type of truant based on **School Self-Report**

- ☐ Specific lesson absence,
- ☐ Post registration truancy,
- ☐ Parental-condoned truancy,
- ☐ Other: _____

Type of truant based on **Parent Self-Report**

- ☐ Specific lesson absence,
- ☐ Post registration truancy,
- ☐ Parental-condoned truancy,
- ☐ Other: _____

Section C - CATEGORIES OF TRUANT

From the list provided check one box that applies to the student.

- ☐ **Traditional** (shy, low self-concept, misses because of school **social conditions**)
- ☐ **Psychological** (laziness, illness, fear, miss school for **emotional reasons**)
- ☐ **Institutional** (leader, miss school because of reasons related to the **school itself**)
- ☐ **Generic** (haphazardly misses school for **different reasons**)
- ☐ **Recreational** (misses school for reasons of pleasure or **to avoid an activity or task**)
- ☐ **Life-style truants** (Marginal member, misses school because has no bond to it)

Section C - Overall Report of the Truant & Statement of Work Responsibility

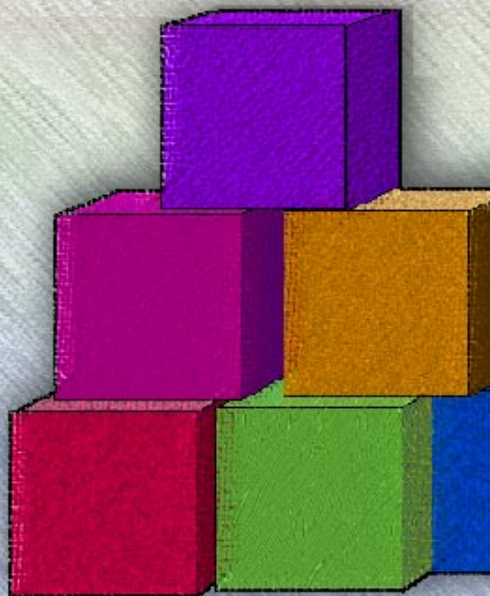
Exploration of Gentle-Genitty's Perception of School Social Bonding (PSSB) Instrument

Our school policies and procedures...

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | Encourage students to look forward to coming to school. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 2 | Support linkages between students and the community. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 3 | Foster students' creativity. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 4 | Offer extended opportunities for academically at-risk students to participate. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 5 | Reward students for following school rules and policies. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 6 | Encourage students to have a stake in their education. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 7 | Conduct school campaigns to encourage student involvement in school. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 8 | Make after school academic activities available to students. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 9 | Provide opportunities for student leadership. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 10 | Make after school academic activities available to students. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 11 | Encourage student participation in extracurricular activities. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 12 | Encourage teachers to spend time with at-risk students. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 13 | Are perceived by students to be generally fair and equitable. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 14 | Encourage students' belief in themselves. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 15 | Have zero tolerance for bullying or student harassment. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 16 | Have zero tolerance for racism. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 17 | Generally enforce that the law should be obeyed. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 18 | Encourage students to believe teachers are basically good. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 19 | Encourage students to believe peers are basically good. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 20 | Encourage respect for teachers and authority. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 21 | Encourage students to advance their education. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 22 | Show the value of remaining in school. | SA | A | N | D | SD |

Would 75% or more of your students agree that they...

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 23 | Have not smoked in school. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 24 | Have dedicated time to participate in conventional ways of society. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 25 | Have not skipped school. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 26 | Have participated in school activities beyond the classroom. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 27 | Have not drank alcohol in school. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 28 | Have a high degree of obedience for the law and rules of the school. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 29 | Believe it is important to graduate from school. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 30 | Believe teachers are good role models. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 31 | Generally believe the law and school rules should be obeyed. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 32 | Believe it is important to respect authority. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 33 | Generally keep busy with school and other productive activities. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 34 | Spend time with my teachers in addition to regular classroom time. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 35 | Believe that they are active in productive activities in the school. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 36 | Have participated in extracurricular school activities. | SA | A | N | D | SD |



Questions & Remarks

